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THE

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... DEC 1940 MADRAS

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PREFACE

This is the first of a Series of booklets on Adult Education, containing reviews and resumes of work done in the field in the various Provinces and states of India by various agencies and individuals.

In this booklet the problem is dealt with as it presents itself in the Pudukottai, Mysore and Kashmir States and the U. P., Bombay and Bihar Provinces.

In the coming booklets the problem will be dealt with as it is found in the other States and Provinces of India; also the experiences and achievements of other Countries will be recounted in the appropriate place and proper manner.

These booklets will serve to furnish workers in the field with facts and ideas such as world give them the necessary guidance in their task.

T. J. R. Gopal,
General Secretary.

Adult Education in Pudukottai State.

(By V. K. Rajagopala Iyer, B.A., L.T., Pudukkottai.)

Pudukottai is a small Tamil State having an area of 1176 sq. miles and a population of about four lakhs. It is about the size of Cochin in area but its population is only one third of the latter. There are 435 villages and one Municipal town in the State and the main occupation of the people is agriculture. In the matter of education it must be said to be backward when compared with Cochin-the number of literates being only about 11% of the total population. The proportion of males to females in the State is roughly as 10:11 and the literates among them form 22% and 2% respectively There are about 250 schools in the State with an average strength of 50 pupils each. To quote from the last census report "In spite of a large expenditure of money and the incessant efforts of a large body of teachers in State and aided schools for the spread of education among the masses, it is a matter greatly to be deplored that much headway has still to be made."

Considering the slow progress in the spread of literacy among the masses, the Government

brought in a scheme ten years ago and it was worked for over 4 years. According to the scheme Village teachers were encouraged to conduct night schools in their area and for each adult successfully trained a sum of Rs. 2/- was given as grant. In the case of adults from Backward Communities, the grant was Rs. 8/- per head. For the purpose of passing grants, a Board called the Adult Literacy Board was constituted by the Government and members of the Legislative Council, interested in the spread of education and the School Inspectors were nominated as members of the Board. One of the non-official members of the Board assisted by an Inspector examined the adults for the purpose of grant and to satisfy themselves that the adults were illiterate when they joined the night school, the teachers were required to produce a certificate to that effect from a responsible village official. Training for a period of six months was fixed as a minimum for the eligibility of an adult to be presented for examination. Lighting charges for these night schools were also borne by the Government.

The offer of a small remuneration of Rs. 2/- or Rs. 3/- per adult gave no doubt an incentive to the village teachers to take up this kind of work

and for 2 or 3 years everything went off well. About a thousand Literacy certificates were issued to the adults so trained-the standard aimed at being ability to read a vernacular newspaper without many mistakes. But soon the Government felt the necessity to effect retrenchment in the expenditure under education, and the axe first fell on this item. The scheme had therefore to be given up without a fair trial.

I happened to be nominated as the President of the Adult Literacy Board then and I had some opportunity to visit these adult schools personally and observe their working. I noticed that the village teachers had a tendency to treat the adults just in the same way as they did young boys, and adopt the same methods of teaching, followed in boys' schools. After a day's hard work in the fields the adults were really tired when they came to the night school and the drudgery of spelling out words and writing them on slates made them sleep over their books. Moreover the adults seemed to evince no interest in learning and they felt that it was more to help the teacher to earn a few rupees than to benefit themselves that they came to the night schools. In some places however, where the teacher happened to be intelligent & enthusiastic, he managed

to rouse some interest in his pupils and the progress in such schools was always satisfactory. If the teacher cared simply for the grant, he managed to gather a few adults who had lapsed into illiteracy, give them a few months training, present them for examination and get his money. He never cared to see whether the adults trained by him continued to be literate and did not lapse once more into illiteracy as they did before. The defects in the scheme therefore were that the interest of the adults were not roused properly and provision was not made for helping the adult who had gained some literacy to keep it up.

In any scheme of adult education therefore these two points must clearly be borne in mind. The pupils must first be made to appreciate the value of reading and then begin reading themselves. During the first few days, they may be asked to sing songs in praise of God, or perform bajanas, and thus take some lively interest in the night classes. The teacher may tell them some interesting stories and read out to them news from the local vernacular papers. He may gradually draw them into a discussion on subjects connected with rural welfare and thus rouse in them an interest to learn things first-hand from papers and

books. Interest thus created will make them feel an urge to get training in the 3 "Rs." and they will never thereafter feel drowsy in the night class or sleep over their books. Books have been written specially for Adult Schools, the recent publication by the Ex-premier of Madras being one, and these may be placed in their hands without any fear of their losing interest in study. With interest on the part of the pupils and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher, literacy will be a matter of a few months and to make the adult feel that he has gained proficiency in reading, a certificate by a competent authority-say the Inspector of Schools or the President of the District Board-may be issued to him. In order that the adults might not lapse into illiteracy again, reading rooms and libraries might be started in such areas and books suitable to their ability, placed in their hands. Weekly talks on current events may be arranged and interest in study kept up.

As for finance, it is good that the Government spend a small amount for the purpose, at the early stages. When the adults come to take interest in education, they will themselves contribute and carry on the work of the night school and the Reading Room. In places where there is a co-

operative society working, a small portion from the Common Good Fund might be utilised for the purpose with the permission of the Registrar-Central Banks also might make a small contribution. Village Panchayats may, with advantage, take up this kind of work, find funds for it and keep the torch of learning always bright in the village.

It is when the question of men comes in, there is difficulty. Men imbued with a spirit of service are needed for this kind of work, and very rarely do we find such people in a vllage. It is the village teacher that can do this work most efficiently but he has neither the inclination nor the enthusiasm for doing this work. The feeling that he is under-paid chills all his enthusiasm and he does not like to take any initiative in the matter. But if he is offered a small grant and is made to feel that his work will win recognition at the hands of the authorities, he may be persuaded to start a night school and run it on, with advantage to himself and to the adults whom he undertakes to teach. A central agency to guide and control the work of these teachers is necessary and if the Government would themselves undertake it, it is well and good; but it may not be possible and in such cases the

Y. M. C. A. or the Co-operative District Bank or Federation or a Central Adult Education Committee formed especially for the purpose, might take it up. The members must periodically visit the night school, encourage and guide the teacher in his work and rouse in the adults a genuine desire to learn. They may supplement the work of the teacher by arranging periodical talks to the villagers on subjects relating to rural welfare or by taking a party of scouts to entertain them with music, camp-fire or drama.

Noawadays Adult Education work is under taken by different agencies in different ways in different places and method suitable to each locality might be followed. At Pudukottai, there is a paid Rural Development Officer and he is doing some work in select villages. The Y. M. C. A. Secretary has chosen a few villages near the town for rural work and he is trying to organise night schools for the benefit of the adults therein. More work in this direction could be done but human material is lacking. Adult Education work is catching the imagination of people elsewhere and it is wished and prayed that similar enthusiasm is shown here also and illiteracy obliterated at no distant date.

Adult Education in Mysore State.

There is no system of adult education in the State and no specific provision is made for it in the budget. The old type adult schools demonstrated their futility and became extinct, and the schools that now exist are isolated venture subsidised by Government on the merits of each case. There were, however 73 schools for adults on 31st March 1939 with an enrolment of 2,078. Classified according to languages, there were 54 Kannada Schools, 17 Urdu Schools, 1 Telugu School and 1 Arabic School.

The question of Adult Schools is closely linked up with the problem of general literacy, but the aims, methods content and conditions of work of such schools have to be different from those that obtained in the past.

As effort in the direction of disseminating useful information among adults is made by Mr. B. M. Sivaramaiya, First Grade Pleader, Nanjangud. He visited 142 places during the year and delivered 193 lectures on the following subjects:-

(1) Honey and wax.
(2) Japan and its people.

(3) What is Science.
(4) Migration of Plants.
(5) Earthquakes.
(6) The World of Energy.
(7) Air Travel.
(8) Balloons and Aeroplanes.
(9) Talkies.
(10) The Work of Volcanoes.
(11) The Atmosphere.
(12) Sericulture.
(13) Conquest of the Air.
(14) Life and Science.
(15) Body movement and body control.
(16) Heat and Temperature.
(17) Health and Temperature.
(18) The Plant life.

These lectures were non-technical in character, such as to appeal to the masses, and were greatly appreciated by the Public.

Adult Education for Women :—

There is also a special institution for the education of adult women called "The Vocational Institute for Women" in Mysore which is a Government Aided one serving the educational needs of adult women in the State teaching voca-

tional subjects particularly suited to Women's natural sphere of activities. The Institute is under the guidance of a committee appointed by Government consisting of official and non-official members. The aim of this institution is primarily to help poor women who through poverty or other circumstances are forced to discontinue their studies and learn an art by which they can earn an honest living. In addition to needle-work in all its several branches, Fancy work and Embroidery and Weaving, the Institute also trains pupils in Domestic Science such as Cooking, House-keeping, Sanitation and Hygiene. Literary education is also given to further their cultural knowledge. The course of instruction covers a period of 2 years.

Provision has also been made for a hostel in the premises of the Institute, where lodging and boarding are given for about 30 free boarders who happen to be very poor, under the director supervision of the Superintendent and a Resident Matron.

Provision has also been made to board and teach those women who are in a position to pay fees and for women coming from out of the State, A nominal fee of Rs. 8/- per mensem is charged.

The Institute has a strength of 61 distributed as follows:—

Day Scholars	....	...	20
Free Boarders	...	...	25
Paying Boarders	...	...	8
Deaf Pupils	...	...	8

ADULT EDUCATION IN U. P.

By
S. N. CHATURVEDI,
Edu. Expansion Officer, U. P. Lucknow.

The Education Expansion scheme was formally inaugurated in the Provinces on January 15, 1939. The scheme is divided into two parts (i) creation of literacy and (ii) maintenance of literacy. The inaugural date was observed as the Literacy Day throughout the Province. In all cities, towns and important villages the Day began with Prabhat Pheris, and huge processions were taken out in the afternoon which terminated in public meetings at which the Literacy Day Messages were read out to the audiences and lectures on the importance of spreading literacy were delivered. Altogether 9,245 meetings were held. People were asked to sign literacy pledges promising to make one person literate or pay Rs. 2. Thus Rs. 38,680/- were

collected. The Literacy Day was very successful in arousing public interest in the scheme.

Creation of Literacy. 960 adult school teachers were appointed and each teacher was given a group of 8 to 10 villages. This formed the main pivot of the machinery for the creation of literacy. Private bodies were also encouraged by the grant of aid to take up the work. 915 schools were given aid. The greatest emphasis was, however, laid on the bonus scheme under which each voluntary worker who make a person literate was offered Re. 1/- District and Municipal Boards, factories, Banks, etc. were requested to arrange for making all their menial employees literate. All the Intermediate Colleges, High Schools and Vernacular Middle Schools were requested to adopt a village each to try to make all educable and willing adults in that village literate within a year. 437 out of 1,197 institutions adopted this scheme.

The student community desired to cooperate with this scheme but considering their peculiar circumstances, they were requested to take up the 'No Thumb Impression Campaign'. They succeeded in teaching 1,53,251 persons to sign their names.

Special primers and readers in Hindi and Urdu, and nine charts in Hindi as well as in Urdu

were prepared for use in the adult schools. All pupils were supplied with text books free of cost. Some special teaching appliances were also prepared and distributed among schools.

In order to make sure that only illiterate or semi-literate persons were taught in the adult schools, the pupils are examined and certified illiterate or semi-literate before they are allowed to join a class. The standard of literacy has been fixed. It requires the attainment (1) ability to read a piece of the standard of a class III of primary school with a fluency of about 30 words per minute, (2) to write simple sentences and (3) the possession of a very elementary knowledge of the Geography of India and Arithmetic. Before a literacy certificate signed by the Deputy Inspector of Schools is given, the pupil is examined by a duly authorised examiner who is generally the Head Master of a Vernacular Middle School. The total number of persons made literate during the year was 2,79,604.

Maintenance of Literacy. No scheme of literacy can be successful unless methods are adopted to prevent the new literates from relapsing into illiteracy. The weakness of most schemes of literacy hitherto had been that due attention was not

paid to this aspect of the question. The U. P Government, however, decided that agencies for the maintenance of literacy should form an integral part of their scheme of literacy. Accordingly 768 libraries and 3,600 reading rooms were opened on. the Literacy Day, 1939. Each library is supplied with about 300 books in Hindi and Urdu beside necessary equipment. These are situated in the rural areas. Each library has five branches within a radius of 5 to 8 miles which receive a box containing 20 to 30 books each month. A full and regular account of the books issued by these libraries and their branches is kept by the librarians. The numbers of Hindi and Urdu books supplied to these libraries are 1,58,721 and 51,015 respectively. The total number of books issued to the public from January 1939 to December 1939 is 12,20,131. Each reading room is given two weeklies and one monthly magazine in Hindi and Urdu according to local demand. In places which have educated or literate women, special ladies magazines in Hindi or Urdu are also supplied. The total number of copies of the weeklies supplied to the reading rooms per week was 7,200 and that of the magazines supplied each month was 4,150. The total number of visitors in the libraries and reading rooms during the year was 39,34,217. The

men incharge of the reading rooms are required to read out the newspapers to the illiterate villagers and they are given an allowance of Re. 1/ per month for this work. The total number of persons to whom the papers were read was 46,43,152. A few districts did not keep record of the attendance in such getherings. In addition to the Government rural libraries which are entirely maintained by the Government, the Department also helps private libraries in rural areas. The scale of annual grant is from Rs. 36 to Rs. 96 per year according to the size and usefulness of the library. The number of libraries in receipt of such grants is 503. They are also given to periodicals in addition to the grant which is mainly for the purchase of books.

This was the first year of the working of the Education Expansion programme. The organisation had to be created. The scheme had to be drawn up. Text books, charts, posters and teaching appliances had to be prepared; a large number of books, newspapers and magazines had to be selected; the equipment for schools, libraries and reading rooms had to be provided, and lastly the scheme had to be launched and worked as efficiently as possible. This was impossible with out the help and guidance of the Director of Public

Instruction who directed the Deputy Inspectors of Schools to cooperate with the Education Expansion Department in running the scheme. The Circle Inspectors of Schools and their assistants also offered their full cooperation. But the brunt of work fell on the Deputy Inspectors of Schools who are hard worked officers. The Education Expansion Department takes this opportunity of publicly acknowledging its gratitude to them. The Department drew up a programme for the year and each district was required to contribute a quota of the literates during the year. This quota was fixed mainly on the basis of the population of the districts-although certain other factors were also taken into account. Many districts have more than contributed their quota. In some cases they have failed to do so. But the Education Expansion Department is aware that in most cases their failure to contribute the quota was due to causes beyond the control of the Deputy Inspectors of Schools. The Department also acknowledges its debt of gratitude the Rural Development Officer for his very valuable and hearty cooperation in this scheme. The numbers of the public spirited and enthusiastic people, heads of institutions, members of the staff of the District Board and Municipal Board offices who have helped this noble

work by making the last Literacy Day and the scheme successful is too large to allow individual mention. People of all shades of opinion, irrespective of their social, religious or political views cooperated with this scheme. They all deserve thanks of the public. Lastly a very honourable mention must be made of the cooperation that this Department has received from the teachers and students of this Province whose unbounded enthusiasm, sincere and selfless work made the first year of the scheme the success that it has proved.

LITERACY DRIVE IN THE CITY OF BOMBAY DURING THE YEAR 1939-40.

Bombay's Peculiar Problem.

The problem of liquidation of illiteracy in Bombay city, as in other parts of the country, is colossal in magnitude and difficult financially. This city has, moreover, its peculiar problems. Though the percentage of literacy is about 24, the population is floating, immigration from and emigration to villages being constant. Most of the 6 lacks (approximately) illiterates between the ages of 15 to 50 in the city i. e. about 4½ lacks are em-

ployed in the mills or big factories and owing to the insufficiency of village occupations there is a constant influx of young villagers—both men and women, towards the city as there is a corresponding exodus from it to the villages owing to the nature and conditions where they have to work. Then Bombay has become a second home of outsiders speaking nearly six or seven mother tongues, viz. Marathi, Gujarati, Urdu, Hindi, Kannda, Telugu and Tamil. The problem of providing books-both text and supplementary, to pupils and supervision on the literacy classes has administractively become very difficult.

Illiteracy attacked from two fronts.

Bombay has, however, decided to face the problem however difficult, with a determination to eradicate illiteracy from the population in as short a period as financially possible, and the problem is being attacked from two fronts in this city, viz. by means of compulsory education from the middle to the top. The Bombay Corporation has made elementary education free and compulsory in all Wards to children between the ages of 6 to 11 plus from January 1940, at an additional cost of nearly 3 lacks of rupees and the Bombay Goverment with

the co-operation of the Corporation and the public have launched the literacy campaign for the adults.

The First Intensive Efforts.

A systematic and organised drive against adult illiteracy on a grand scale was under-taken in last April-May by the Bombay Literacy Campaign Committee when a whirlwind propaganda for awakening the public consciousness re. the urgency of the problem was carried on and literacy classes for adults were started in the different parts of the city. Later on the Government of Bombay appointed a Special Bombay Adult Education Committee with Mr. B. G. Kher, the then Prime Minister and Minister of Education as its President and took the direction of the Campaign in their own hands.

15000 adults made literate during the year.

The grown-up pupils attending the 320 literacy classes of this first session were trained in a course of literacy which ran for four months and at the end of this period, viz. 31st August, 1939, as many adults became literate. A simple literacy test was held and those who satisfied it were given literacy certificates (copies enclosed for perusal).

Satisfied by this splendid response from the illiterates as well as from the honorary workers

on the recommendation of the Committee Government appointed Mr. K. T. Mantri as a Special Literacy Officer with a separate clerical, supervising and teaching staff. With this special arrangement, the second campaign began from November 1939 Nearly 600 classes were opened in the city where more than 12,000 pupils-men and women speaking six or seven regional languages, were enlisted. As in the first session these pupils were tested at the end of February last and nearly 10000 more adults were made literate, bringing the number of literates to 15000, during the year. Besides these, classes have been opened in January, February and March which approximately number 450 giving literacy instruction to nearly 8000 more adults.

Finances.

The Adult Education Committee spent nearly Rs. 48000 during the financial year in order to turn out more than 15000 grown-up literates. Out of this amount Government contribution was Rs. 31000/-, Corporation's Rs 10000 and the rest is or is to be collected from the public. It will be seen that the cost of educating one adult comes to just about Rs. 3¼ in the city.

The scheme of literacy.

The instruction in literacy consists of ability just read simple language and write short sentences and sign the name. This course extends over a period of four months at the end of which a literacy test is held and literacy certificates are given as pointed out above.

Each literacy class keeps 20 to 25 adults on the roll and a minimum average daily attendance of 15 is insisted excepted in the case women classes. A supervisor is in charge of 10 to 15 classes which he is expected to visit at least twice a week.

The Committee bears the whole cost on account of the books, slates etc. to be given to the adult pupils and the out-of-pocket expenses of the teachers and the supervisors which have been fixed at Rs. 7 and Rs. 10 payment respectively.

Training of teachers.

The majority of teachers and supervisors are volunteers who have no experience of teaching in schools and are laymen. A Committee of experienced teachers from the local municipal or secondary schools has been appointed to arrange occasional demonstration lessons and discussion on the method of teaching at different centres.

Text-books and Supplementary Reading books.

The Committee has got a plan for having its own books written to suit the adult Psychology, their tastes and interests. As pointed out above, however, it has not yet been possible to get special books written in all languages. Similarly the Committee is conscious of the fact that the new adults will shortly lapse into illiteracy if sufficient, provision in not made to enable them to keep up the habit of reading. The Committee has, therefore, introduced the practice of supplying them with easy booklets for about a year after they complete the literacy course. The schemes for special classes for supervised reading and reading rooms at different centres have been prepared and it is hoped that they will be put in to operation during the next year if funds are available.

Women classes.

It may be added that the needs of liliterate women are properly attened to. During the year 194 classes for women of all classes and speaking all languages were maintained and 1250 women were made literate. Besides these, the Bombay Branch of the All India Women Conference have been conducting about 50 classes for women therein nearly 1000 women are receiving literacy instruction on the lines mentioned above.

Table "A".

Session		Number of Classes			Number of roll			No. of adults achieved Literacy during 1939-1940.			Percentage of Literate adults to the No. of adults on roll.		
From	To	Men	Wo-men	Tot-al	Men	Wo-men	Tot-al	Men	Wo-men	Tot-al	Men	Wo-men	Tot-al
May, 1939	August, 1939	331	29	360	6620	445	7065	4572	294	4866	69·0	66·8	68·8
Novr., 1939	Feb., 1940	543	57	600	10570	994	11573	8893	729	9622	84·0	73·0	83·3
Total for 1939—40.		874	86	960	17199	1439	18638	13465	1023	14488	78·3	71·1	77·7
Jan., 1940	April, 1940	22	64	86	441	985	1426	Classes started in 1939-40 but completed their course in 1940-41.					
Feb., 1940	May, 1940	36	12	48	741	241	982						
March 1940	June, 1940	263	37	300	5260	555	5815						
Total.		321	113	434	6442	1781	8223						

Table "B".

Table showing the number of the literacy classes and adults according to Languages in the Literacy Classes Which were closed before the end of 31st March 1940.

	Marathi.			Gujarati.			Urdu.			Hindi.			Kannada.			Telugu.			Total.		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
No. of classess.	427	38	465	42	40	82	104	2	106	246	—	246	29	5	34	26	1	27	874	86	960
No. of adults on roll.	8279	605	8884	845	703	1548	1998	30	2028	4988	—	4988	558	83	641	53	18	549	17199	1439	18638
No. of adults achieved literacy.	6564	473	7037	603	473	1076	1641	24	1665	3965	—	3965	386	47	433	306	6	312	13465	1023	14488

TABLE "C"

Table showing the receipts and expenditure for the year 1939-40.

Receipts.		Expenditure.			
Source.	Amount.	Liability incurred	Actually paid.	Balance carried over to 1940-41.	Deficit (in round figures)
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Government grant.	31285				
2. Corporation grant.	10000				
3. Bombay City Literacy Association's balance transferred to the Committee.	2000	49170	45284	884	3000
4. Donations from the public.	2586				
5. Circus show income.	260				
6. Miscellaneous.	37				
Total	46168	49170	45284	884	3000

The case for "Literacy" in Adult Education.

By

Pandit N. L. Kitroo,

Adult Education Officer, Kashmir & Jammu State.

All sections of thinking Indians accept the view that Adult Education has a very prominent place in every scheme of reconstruction in India. In certain quarters it is considered to be the most important plank of National regeneration in all important spheres——Social, Political, Economic, Industrial.

This is all to the good and indicates that the first stage of doubt as to its efficacy and even practicability has been successfully negotiated. We find ourselves at the second stage, that of determining what form Adult Education should take. It is here that we are faced with a variety of views and opinions, each different from the others and occasionally even antagonistic. And yet, strangely enough, each view claims to base itself on the psychology of the Adult, his environment, his interests and his pre-occupation.

One view holds that Adult Education can only be successful if imparted throughvisual aids.

It is argued that, what is seen leaves a clearer and more permanent impression than what is heard or mentally visualized. Visual aids like the magic-lantern, the cinematograph and the drama are advocated as the most effective means of enlarging the mental horizon and imparting that knowledge about the needs, the problems and the interests of the villagers which adult education is supposed to cater for.

Another view advocates a programme of talks, discussions, and Kathas in which villagers may be encouraged to participate. It is claimed for the the villager that he is gifted with a very shrewd commonsense which requires only a congenial occasion to draw out and develop. The discussions would help to provoke his native intelligence and under proper guidance would help to present to him points of view different from his own which he will in time learn to appreciate.

It is not within the scope of this short article to assess the comparative worth and value of these lines of approach to Adult Education. What I propose to discuss briefly is the place of literacy in the scheme. Many people are inclined to discredit the efficacy of adult literacy as a means to Adult Education. They hold the view that literacy is a dull and tedious business, that it takes

time which villagers cannot easily spare from their manifold engagements, and that even if it is acquired it is of such an elementary nature that it does not give the necessary skill to use books with profit. Then there is the additional argument that books properly written out are not available in Indian languages, and in any case they cost money which villagers as a class are neither able nor willing to spare.

These aspects of the question I do not propose to discuss here. I only wish to point out that whatever approach to Adult Education may be made, it would be incomplete unless literacy is made a necessary part of the scheme. Every other means of education lends itself to be abused or at least narrowed down in its scope according to the notions of those administering it. A magic-lantern would show only that aspect which the organisation responsible for it chooses to display. A talk may be used and in actual fact has been used, to initiate narrow views of party programmes. Kathas or religious discourses may similarly degenerate into sectarian squabbles or communal misunderstanding. Effective literacy is not equally open to abuse. A reader of books has access to every point of view. He can frame his opinion according to his own lights without being biassed by interested people. He has the opportunity to

cultivate a catholicity of out—look which is not available to one, who has been regimented to special views and party loyalties by the insidious but potent weapon of dosage at the hands of the exploiting interests.

The plea that acquisition of literacy is a difficult job for an adult is now an exploded myth and is no longer seriously held. The absence of properly written books too is not a strong argument, for a class of writers is springing up which has placed before itself the pleasant task of producing wholesome, interesting, and useful material for the masses in almost all the principal languages of India.

Then there is the further consideration. If education is to be for leisure as it undoubtedly is, it postulates an individual skill to make use of that leisure at the time and in the place where such leisure is available. This condition is fullfilled only by literacy. Other forms of education require a set environment, a specified time, and a co-operation of workers which cannot be adjusted to the leisure of each individual concerned.

Again education to be really useful is a selective process. Each individual must make his own choice of what to read in conformity with his mental and physical needs. This too is possible only through literacy.

In talking of literacy I assume that those in charge will make adequate arrangements for carrying on the elementary work done in adult literacy centres through supervised study circles, continuation classes and library service.

Mass Literacy Drive in Behar 1938-1939.

By

B. B. MUKERJI

Secretary, Provincial Mass Literacy Committee, Behar.

In the middle of March 1938 an appeal was issued by the Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education in the local press calling upon the students and teachers of Bihar to devote the ensuing Summer vacation to the liquidation of the illiteracy and ignorance of the masses of this Province. In response to this appeal, the College Professors and School Teachers of Patna organised a public meeting at the Bihar Youngmen's Institute on the 25th March, 1938 with Dr. S. C. Sarkar in the chair. The Hon'ble Minister of Education addressed this meeting and it was decided to organise this Campaign in right earnest. A Mass Literacy Committee was formed with Dr. S. C. Sarcar as President, Prof. B. B. Mukerji and Mr. Harbans Lall as Joint Secretaries. On the 30th March 1938 the students of Patna held a meeting at the Senate Hall with Mr. Syed Naqui Imam, M. L. C., in the chair and they whole heartedly supported the appeal of the Hon'ble Minister and offered their co-operation. The

month of April was devoted to the formulation of the plan of work, preparation of Charts and Primers, enrolment of Volunteers for work at Patna and in the villages and their training in the Rapid Method of teaching adults.

The Inaugural meeting was held in the grounds of the Science College, Patna. Processions started from all Schools and Colleges shouting slogans such as "Down with Illiteracy" "Teach the Illiterate" and converged at the Science College.

The actual working of the Literacy Centres commenced on the 2nd May 1938 and as the College and H. E. School Students reached their homes, they gave a tremendous impetus to the work which had already been started by the local teachers or educated villagers In many Districts the main burden of the work fell on the Primary school teachers and not only they worked hard to make the movement successful but in many cases met the cost of oil from their own pockets. Outside Urban areas, in most cases the volunteers, students or teachers, supplied their own lamps while slates were secured from the day scholars of village schools.

The young volunteers in many villages displayed great resourcefulness and powers of organisation and tried their best to arrange for the

continuity of their work even after the reopening of their schools and colleges.

In the first phase of the Movement each term was of six weeks' duration. The charts and primers based on the Rapid Method of teaching enabled an illlitrate adult of average intelligence to learn reading and writing simple words in four weeks' time and two more weeks were given for giving him some practice.

In was decided in October 1938 that in the Second Phase of the Mass Literacy Campaign in addition to the general work which was being done all over the Province one Thana in every District and two Subdivisions (Simdega in Ranchi and Bankain Bhagalpur) were to be selected for intensive Campaign. Efforts should be made in these areas to make all illliterate male adults between the ages of 15 to 40 literate within six months.

In accordance with these decisions the organisation of both Intensive and General Literacy work was taken up and on the 1st December the Intensive Campaign was launched.

The following is a brief outline of the present system of organisation and supervision of literacy work. Before a centre is started in the village, a census of illiterates is taken and a village

committee is formed. The functions of the village committee include checking at the time of the admission of the students whether they are really illiterates or not, persuading these students to attend, raising funds locally to meet the cost of oil etc. and checking reports and returns which are sent from the centres. In areas of Intensive Campaign a number of centres have been formed into groups for the purpose of supervision and these have been placed in charge of Headmasters of Middle English Schools, Upper primary Schools or respectable men of the locality willing to take up this work. Usually these groups correspond with the areas of Chaukidari Circles.Representatives from these Circles along with others from the Thana Literacy Committee.The local Sub-Inspector of Police, the local doctor and other prominent people of the locality are members and office bearers of this committee and any returns and reports from the Thana are required to pass through it. Over the Thana Committee are the Sub-divisional and District Literacy Committees. The President or Secretary of the Local Thana Committee is usually a member or office bearer of the Thana Literacy Committee.

The Government have appointed a Provincial Mass Literacy Committee under the presidentship of the Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of

Education, Development and Employment. There are 53 members including 7 ladies and 24 of the members are members of the Legislatures. An Executive Committee of 22 members has been formed.

The Education Department has arranged wherever possible to place one Sub-Inspector of Schools in sole charge of the Thana selected for Intensive work and they are receiving ample assistance from Headmasters of local Middle English Schools in the work of day to day supervision.

At the end of each term of 3 months examinations in reading, writing and simple Arithmetic are held. In every case the examiners come from outside the village to which the centre belongs.

The reading test includes reading 10 sentences from different pages of the primers and 5 sentences made up of words learnt from primers. The writing test includes writing of the name of the pupil, name of his village, of two sentences from the primer and dictation. In Arithmetic the pupil is asked to count from 21 to 50 and do sums in mental Arithmetic involving two mental processes. One third of the aggregate has been fixed as the pass mark. As it was not possible, with the help of existing Inspecting staff, to exercise day to day supervision

over attendance at all the centres all over the province, the method of payment of honorarium of 5 annas per literate which includes the cost of oil, is very small compared to that being paid in other provinces. This scale has been kept low so as to maintain the voluntary character of the movement and is intended to meet the out-of-pocket expenses of ill paid teachers anxious to do public service.

The total number of centres in the Province during the Second Phase was 14,259 with 3,18,737 pupils out of whom 1,47,670 were made literate upto 31—3—39. Between May 1938 and June 1939 over 6 Lakhs may be said to have become literate.

The response from the Harijans throughout the Province has been encouraging. They formed about 12 percent of the total number of Hindus under instruction. In some Districts particularly in Intensive areas, they formed a much higher percentage i. e., Palamau 53 p. c., Sonthalparganas 42 p. c., Monghyr 17 p. c., Champaran 22. These figures do not fully bring out the enthusiasm with which the Harijans have taken to this movement. They have joined in large numbers without much persuasion and in many places even in the face of the opposition of the other Hindus. In many

villages these poor men have even purchased their own slates and have contributed to the cost of oil.

Very little progress so far has been made in the expansion of literacy among women. Paucity of lady workers and the handicap of the Purdah have retarded progress. Efforts have however been made to interest socially minded ladies in this work. The Mass Literacy Committee set apart Rs. 5,000 for aid to Women's Centres and District Inspectress of Schools, were entrusted with the work of Organisation and Supervision. In consultation with the Inspectress of Schools, Bihar the scheme of payment to Women's Centres was prepared and money allotted according to the list of centres supplied by her. It was decided that where honorary lady workers were not available payment would be made at the rate of Rs. 5 per month per centre. The total number of Centres on the 31st March 39 was 291 with 4084 pupils on the rolls of whom 1,547 became literate. A novel experiment has been inaugurated at Kasba in the Purnea District at the instance of Mr. S. M. Alam Inspector of Schools, Bhagalpur Division. Finding it difficult to secure lady workers to help in the expansion of literacy among women he started in January 1939 a Little Teachers' Movement by forming a Little Teachers' Troop

at Kasba Middle English School on the lines of the Little Teacher's Movement in China. 62 boys of this school between the ages of 10 and over have undertaken to teach their female relations and women of their neighbourhood. A boy aged 14 is the President, another boy aged 11 is the Secretary. In course of the last 3 months they have taught over 150 women.

Volunteer Workers.

A remarkable feature of the Intensive Campaign has been the enlistment of a large army of Hindi or Urdu educated villagers in the work of teaching at the Literacy Centres. Many of these areas have a small number of Middle English, Upper Primary and Lower Primary Schools. Consequently the number of professional teachers available for literacy work is limited, hence the majority of the centres is being run in these areas by villagers who after passing the Upper Primary or Middle English Examinations have settled down to cultivation. These men have taken up the work as a labour of love. Out of 15,926 Volunteers in the Province as many as 5,331 were Non-teachers.

Special Features........Jail.

No less interesting has been the progress of literacy work in the jails of the Province. Jails all

over the Province of all grades have started literacy centres at which jail officials prisoners and outside volunteers have worked as instructors. It would be no exaggeration to state that all male prisoners who are physically and mentally sound and who have been in any prison from May, 1938 to the present day has attended a Literacy Class. Dr. F. Laubach the famous expert on Adult Education has remarked that the Literacy Campaign has been made the basis of a great reformative movement in the Gaya Jail which has become a veritable Ashram.

In response to an appeal issued by the Hon'ble Minister of Education Industrialists in many parts of the Province have organised Literacy Centres. Mr. J. J. Ghandy, General Manager, Tata Iron and Steel Works has given a splendid lead by enthusiastically taking up the idea and organising a network of well equipped literacy centres for the benefit of labourers at Jamshedpore both for men and women. The Company has supplied the reading and writing materials and has arranged for their supervision.

A large number of Sugar Mills, e.g., New India Sugar Mills, Hussanpur, Pratabpur Sugar Factory, New Swadeshi Sugar Mills, Narkatiaganj, Messrs, Begg Sutherland and Co's. Sugar Mill

at Marhowrah etc. have started a network of centres in their Reserved and Assigned Areas.

Local Bodies:

Many local bodies have given assistance to the movement in various ways. The Shahabad District Board has ordered that the Libraries attached to middle Schools would be thrown open to the public. The Biharsharif Municipality has made it compulsory for its menials to acquire literacy while the Nawada Union Committee has promised an increment in pay to those who become literate.

Police.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister was pleased to issue instructious that all Chaukidars below 40 years in age should become literate within six months and that the Police Officers should give all possible encouragement to this movement. These instructtons have produced good results wherever they have been followed with enthusiasm. In the Champaran and Gaya Districts, for instance Literacy Centres have been started in the Thana compound while in many areas where the intensive campaign is being carried on, local Sub-Inspectors of Police are giving much active assistance as

Presidents or Vice-Presidents of Thana Committees. It may be noted here that about 22,003 Chaukidars have attended centres.

Assistance from other Departments.

The Government have directed officers of all nation building Departments, e.g., Agricultural, Industries, Co-operative, Veterinary and Public Health Departments to visit Literacy centres in the course of their tours and give talks, demonstrations and lantern lectures on the subjects in which they are interested. These visits are not only of great value from the point of view of supervision and propaganda but are helpful in widening the metal outlook of these centres.

The News-Sheet.

Our fortnightly news-sheet "Roshni" has first published on the 1st. December 1938. It is being edited by an Editorial Board with Prof. A. Mannan as Editor-in-chief. It is written in Hindusthani but printed in Nagri and Urdu Scripts. At present 30,000 copies are being printed but the supply is too inadequate in view of the growing demand for it.

Post Literacy Instruction.

The Organisation of Post Literacy Instruction is no less difficult than that in the Preliteracy stage

with this difference that once a grown up person became literate,he does not require much peruasion to keep up his literacy. Hence the main task is to ensure an adequate supply of reading matter for new literates. One method is to start Circulating Libraries and this has been done at Patna and Bhagalpore. In many villages, existing Libraries have started circulating sections for the benefit of Literacy Centres.

Village Libraries.

The Government has started 4,000 Village Libraries each consisting of 200 Hindi and Urdu booklets on topics of importance to the villager in his daily life. Each Library is supplied with a weekly newspaper in addition to the "Roshni" and the main function of the Librarian is to persuade the new literates to read these books so that they may not lapse into illiteracy. In addition to these Libraries steps have been taken to continue Post-literacy class for a further period of three months which will meet thrice per week at which the pupils will read the graded series of readers which have been published by the Provincial Mass Literacy Committee.

Staff.

The Campaign has been carried on so far

with the assistance of the existing inspecting staff of the Education Department and everyone has worked without any extra remuneration.

Cost of the Mass Literacy Campaign.

In the First Phase, with the exception of a small amount received from the discretionary fund of the Hon'ble Minister of Education and from the charity funds of the Local Executive Officials, no finiancial aid was received from the Government and in the Second Phase the Government gave a grant of Rs. 80,000. Subscriptions were received from the Local Bodies and the public in both the phases. In 1939-40 the Government made a grant of Rs. 2 Lakhs for Mass Literacy Works.

Conclusion.

The Intensive Campaign has had a great psychological effect on the people. What had appeared well nigh impossible is now considered within the bounds of possibility. Outside areas of Intensive Campaign wherever a local leader or an enthusiastic Sub-Inspector of Schools has taken the initiative net works of Literacy Centres have sprung up and are thriving.

Competent observers have remarked that in areas where the Literacy Campaign has proved

successful there has been an appreciable demand for the opening of new Day Schools for boys and admissions to the existing schools have increased. Further reports have been received from many villages that Literacy Centres have been able to keep the adults away from the liquor shops and the sale of liquor has gone down.

Curiously enough the Literacy Campaign in urban areas has not been so successful as in rural areas, possibly due to greater diversions of urban life as well as to the indifference of the educated section of the urban population. It must be noted that where enthusiastic workers are available to carry on sustained work the movement has made notable progress even in towns. More efforts should in future be made to create a real interest in literacy work among the educated urban residents.

The irregularity of attendance has been a serious obstacle. It is idle to expect that the adults would be as regular in attendance as school boys but a reasonable degree of attendance can certainly be expected of them. The apathy and inertia of ages and the inability to perceive any direct connection between literacy and their economic welfare are no doubt responsible for this to a large extent but where after a few days' attendance some of them drop off, in nine cases

out of ten the cause is the inability of the teacher to hold their attention and some defect in his method of approach. The proper training of the teacher therefore will, to a large extent, prevent this.

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